D62

The Report of
the 1982 Annual Meeting
April 28 to 30, 1982

New Directions for the Eighties

The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
Washington, DC 20210

READEX FICHE best copy available

PrEx 1.10:

Introduction

The 1982 meeting of the President's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped took place April 28 through 30 in Washington, D.C., and had as its theme, "New Directions." Almost 3,600 handicapped delegates from all parts of the country and from a good number of foreign countries came to hear what the new directions were.

There was apprehension about the state of the economy and about the dearth of jobs for those schooled in the liberal arts and humanities. The Job Fair was busier than ever, trying to match an unprecedented number of applicants with prospective employers.

There was optimism about the great strides technology is making. The bionic person is almost upon us. Prostheses are available not just for limbs, but for joints as well. Hearing aids can now be implanted. Under the skin insulin insertions will have to be replenished only once a month. And there's a host of electronic devices to assist the seeing-impaired.

The Administration was represented by David B. Swoap, Under Secretary of Health and Human Services, who gave the key address at the Opening Banquet on Wednesday. Raymond J. Donovan, Secretary of Labor, spoke at the Thursday Opening Session. They both stressed the advantage of decentralizing services that were formerly handled by the Federal Government.

While many speakers stressed the positive role each handicapped individual must play in his or her own rehabilitation, the highest audience ratings for pulling one's self up by one's bootstraps went to David Prowse, the British actor who played Darth Vader in "Star Wars" and to Lou Holtz, Head Football Coach at the University of Arkansas. David Prowse, the master of ceremonies of the Annual Meeting, was besieged by autograph seekers from Wednesday night to Friday afternoon.

The workshops were the heart and soul of the meeting. The audience participation in each was intense. At one point reactions against a proposed alteration of Section 504 (programs in institutions with government grants) caused some to leave the room in protest of the speakers representing the government who tried to press their points.

The State winners of both the National Journalism and the Poster contests came to the capital with delight at the honor they had earned written all over them. By the end of the meeting, they had the glazed look of all tourists who try to take in all of Washington in one gulp.

Joe Glazer, the folksinger, launched his new song about disability, "The Cookie Song"; the audience sang along from the start.

All who entertained—from Beyond Sound, "Deaf Talent Showcase", to Irene Gubrud, opera soprano on crutches, to Harold Krents, a well-known blind

Washington attorney who started his MC role for Thursday evening with a cabaret song—were greeted with delight and roundly applauded.

In retrospect, the 1982 Annual Meeting differed from those that had gone before. It introduced New Directions for the Eighties which call for renewed vigor on the part of disabled Americans and their supporters.

New Directions for the Eighties

The Administration's view

The keynote speaker for the first evening, David B. Swoap, Under Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, was the first of the Administration's spokespersons. He termed handicapped people "the greatest underused resource" and suggested that a "creative partnership" between Government, business and private enterprise would be the best way to tap "the energy and intellect of disabled Americans."

He discussed the philosophy behind the Administration's decision to transfer to the States the management of programs aimed to assist the handicapped population. He pointed out that :

1. Washington does not have a monopoly on wisdom.
2. State and local offices know the needs of local people.
3. Washington should work as a partner of all the States; so should private sources.

He cited figures which showed that the percentage of the Federal budget spent on entitlement programs had risen steadily over the past 21 years; now it has reached 36% of the total budget. He projected it to rise to 39% in 1986. However, he pointed out that the Federal entitlement programs ought to be used only as a last resort, when all other resources had been exhausted. Some of those other resources lie in the States and cities. Making adequate use of them is the real meaning of the Administration's "New Federalism." Coupled

David Prowse, who played Darth Vader in "Star Wars," describes his biggest "come back."

with voluntarism which, ideally, is a partnership between industry, individuals and Government, the goal of independence for every disabled individual can, and will, be achieved.

The other Administration spokesman echoed this theme. Secretary of Labor Ray Donovan gave the Administration's views from the vantage point of his Department. He said that the Department of Labor has been more involved in the training and promoting of work for handicapped men and women in 1981 than ever before. But he said that a major effort must come from the private sector. He also suggested that handicapped job seekers use Department of Labor statistics on job trends to concentrate their efforts on training for work where manpower shortages exist. (These are usually technical jobs; such as computer programming, engineering and accounting; skilled clerical jobs in white collar industries and skilled crafts for blue collar work.) "If this is done," the Secretary said, "the U.S. will have come a long way toward really using the creative potential of the disabled population."

The Secretary also assured the audience that the Department of Labor will maintain its concern and aid to handicapped workers.

Senator John East (R-N.C.), who has been paralyzed from the waist down since an attack of infantile paralysis at age 24, stressed the importance of the family in the rehabilitation and work preparation of a handicapped individual, as well as the determination of the person himself or herself. He knows there is a legitimate role for Government in the rehabilitation process, but he believes that this role must be circumscribed so that private initiative and personal ambition are not thwarted. "Everybody wants to be independent," he said. "If you are, you have an obligation to perform well for yourself and for others."

The handicapped community's view

Senator East's comments almost echoed the welcoming remarks of Harold Russell, Chairman of the President's Committee. He said that everybody has to face up to change. There is unemployment, New Federalism, a tight budget and increased necessity to justify expenditures. Russell's prescription for a successful "facing up" was:

1. Justify programs in light of meeting their objectives.
2. Mix with the elements of society outside the world of handicapped persons,

Lou Holtz, head coach of the University of Arkansas football team, gives a rousing pep talk on the importance of self-image.

such as business, labor, voluntary organizations, the professions, others.
3. Encourage the cooperation between private and public sectors to ensure education and work.
4. Prepare disabled young people for the world as it really is, not as it used to be.
5. Draw away from the old stereotypes of what a disabled person can or cannot do.

Finally, Harold Russell, who has been in the forefront of the movement for equal rights for handicapped persons, said, "We've come so far, we are not going back."

Harold Russell introduced the Master of Ceremonies for the meeting, David Prowse, better known as Darth Vader, the villain in "Star Wars." David, who spent a good part of his teen years flat on his back in traction in a British hospital bed, stressed the "positive attitude" that allowed a handicapped person to concentrate on the will to overcome the disability. It could be argued that his success—from bedfast teenager to British weightlifting champion, owner of health spas in England and finally movie star—was made easier by the fact that there was no real ailment; he had been misdiagnosed. Yet his years in bed had given him a sensitive understanding of disability, so strong he is devoting most of his time to serve disabled people.

Lou Holtz, Head Football Coach of the University of Arkansas, followed. He gave a "pep talk" that, if delivered at halftime in the locker room to a losing team, would have sent them out to win. He said that, "I've never run into a successful person in my life who didn't have to overcome some type of handicap." His prescription for overcoming these varied handicaps was "self image." "Self image is the most important thing in the world," he assured everybody. "If you don't think you have limitations, you don't have them." He mentioned Pete Grey, a one-armed baseball player who played outfield, and Glenn Cunningham, whose legs were burned in childhood who ran a 4.2 minute mile in the early fifties, before the 4-minute mile had become commonplace.

Daniel Schorr, TV commentator of the Cable News Network, followed him. Schorr traced the history of the rising aspirations of handicapped people from the first stirrings when Franklin D. Roosevelt ran the country from his wheelchair, to the point when the demands for equal opportunity were won for blacks, women and the handicapped population. The handicapped population was included in the struggle of the other minorities because medical services since World War II have saved thousands of lives which, a few years earlier,

Harold Russell, Chairman of PCEH, challenges the handicapped community to take "new directions."

would have been snuffed out for want of modern drugs and modern medicine. Sections 501, 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 were milestones in their fight for equal rights.

The fight isn't over, but now the employers are displaying different attitudes, Schorr believes. "They are no longer interested in whether you have a handicap or not," he said. "These days, the question asked is 'Can you do the job?' In Minneapolis-St. Paul the traffic announcer is blind. He's got a special hook-up with the police and he takes notes in Braille. A young man on National Public Radio does his work from a wheelchair. They can do the job."

Taking a longer look at the history of the past half century, Schorr said, "Revolutions do not go steadily forward. They falter and they rally. But historically, they all finally succeed."

Jerry Guth, the Executive Director of the President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiative, thought that the private sector has taken hold and is pointing toward the "New Directions" with vigor and new ideas. He said that his task force's goal is to create partnerships in which people can have the opportunity to share responsibilities at the community level. His program is there to remind the country that volunteering is the highest level of service. "There is a misconception about the function of the government," he said. "We have spent too much. There must, and will, be basic changes in the relationships between business and local governments, business and labor, business and education. Throughout, we have to rely on the power of the volunteers. They are the designers and movers of the future."

Awards

After speaking on Thursday morning, Secretary Donovan represented The White House in presenting awards to the "Handicapped American of the Year," and to the winners of the poster and journalism competitions.

Quite a guy

Edward Stiehl-Rios has certainly realized what the Secretary had called "the creative potential of the disabled population;" he was named Handicapped

American of the Year. Stiehl-Rios, left a double amputee after being wounded in Korea, swore that he would make life easier for other handicapped people. He worked, pushed, cajoled and sweated his way through the University of Puerto Rico to become a social worker, and a real fighter for equality for the handicapped workers and students in Puerto Rico. The Secretary praised his work and courage. But the "Handicapped American of the Year" missed the accolade that would have pleased him most. One of his two teenaged sons who was with him in Washington said, when somebody remarked, "You must be very proud of your father," "Yes, he's quite a guy, my father." It was said very quietly, out of his father's earshot.

Journalism & poster contests

The journalism contest this year had this theme: "Disabled People at Work." It gave hundreds of junior and senior high school students the chance to do some hands-on research on working conditions and working abilities of handicapped bread-winners. The five young winners shared $6,500 in cash scholarships donated by the Disabled American Veterans.

Amanda I. Hetzel of Bluefield High School in Bluefield, W.Va., the first place winner, is the daughter of a disabled high school guidance counselor; her research started at home. She received $2,000 toward her future schooling. *Tracy Dane* of Palisades Park, N.J., got a check for $1,500, *Jeffry Beck* of Iowa City, Ia., $1,250, *Glenn Miley* of Burdett, N.Y., $1,000 and *Vickie Willis* of Laurel, Mont., $750. Besides the five prizes, five honorable mention certificates were awarded.

The thrusts of the journalism contest and the poster contest were very much the same—"Handicapped people do not want to be treated differently, or specially. They only seek equal treatment and want to use their talents and skills productively." A pretty good message for young people.

The winning poster in the high school category, by *Clint Hansen* of Audubon, Iowa, shows the silhouette of a person in a wheelchair. "See me for what I am," is its legend. Paul C. Krouse, President of Educational Communications, Inc., provided the $1,000 cash scholarship for Hansen. The young artist also spent a day with Jack Perlmutter, a nationally known painter and printmaker, Chairman of the Printmaking Department of the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. The winner in the college category of the poster contest, *Don Tiemeier* of Indianapolis, Ind., shared the day at the Corcoran.

Recognition for employers

The award for the Small Employer of the Year went to *Control Cable Inc.*, of Baltimore, Maryland. In accepting the award, Control Cable's vice president said that the firm had been promoting the hiring of handicapped workers for a long time. He praised the help received from the League of the Handicapped in Baltimore.

Bechtel Power Corporation of Norwalk, California, was the winner of the Large Employer of the Year award. Bechtel not only hires without discrimination; the corporation also promotes only on merit, so that handicapped workers are in every area of the business, from entry level blue collar to senior engineer.

Medical award

Dr. Dudley F. Briggs of Columbus, Ohio, was selected the Physician of the Year for 1982. Dr. Briggs is the medical director of Western Electric's manufacturing branch in Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Briggs, disabled by rheumatoid arthritis, uses his position to encourage opportunities for "on the job" training and growth for disabled employees. He helped establish a joint labor-management committee that identifies jobs that can be done by disabled people, and that modifies the workplace to make it easier for them. Often it is no more difficult than adding a footrest to a tall chair. Dr. Briggs, on receiving the award, said that he accepted it on behalf of all the physicians working with disabled people.

Dr. Herbert Pardes, Commissioner of the National Institute of Mental Health was honored by the President's Committee for his agency's efforts at promoting jobs for mentally restored people. Dr. Pardes pointed out that these people are efficient, reliable and productive. He singled out the open-mindedness of the National Restaurant Association in hiring mentally and physically handicapped people who are ready for work. "Unemployment for this segment of the society is estimated at 70 percent," he reminded the guests at the employers' banquet.

Dan Schorr, cable TV news commentor, traces the history of the handicapped people's movement

Workshops

New technology in the labor market

High technology is being developed for the workplace so people who are deaf, blind, paralyzed or in other ways disabled can be self-supporting members of the community. Some of the best men and women on the forefront of these experiments were panelists in the Thursday afternoon workshop. Dr. Richard M. Rose, President of the Rochester Institute of Technology, Professor Robert W. Mann from M.I.T.; Paul L. Hazan from Johns Hopkins University; John F. Jonas, Jr. from the Rehabilitation Engineering Center in Wichita, Kansas; Dr. Martha Ross Redden from the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C.; Majorie Linville of the Sensory Aids Foundation and Norman C. Hammond from IBM were ready to show what had been done, and what was on the drawing-board.

The concensus was that the research and development to aid the handicapped worker with high technology was only about 10 years old; most of the material is brand new; the commercial availability is not yet assured.

But already there are special TV cameras for closed circuit TV geared to the visually impaired. There is a typewriter that can translate ordinary typewritten material into Braille, now coming on the market. Computers, printed circuits, transistors—every item in the technological revolution of the last ten years—are capable of being put to use for handicapped people. Items being developed are

Harold Russell (centered), Chairman of PCEH, poses with this year's essay contest winners.

those which promise to have ready markets. Something too expensive, too specialized will stay on the drawing-board a good while longer.

Lab specialists designing the special tools or aids were more optimistic about the availability of the devices. They pointed to prototypes already in use, such as artificial arms connected to nerves coming from the stump and animated by transistors charged by those nerves; the new reading machines for blind people; implanted mini-hearing aids.

All agreed that more sophisticated devices were going to come on the market. The only question was the timing.

Local resources: Targets for growth

Local resources are going to be of growing importance in this era of voluntarism and funding cuts. In addition, handicapped students as well as handicapped adults must be more aware of how they can be involved in the training processes necessary to attain independence. So said the panel members Professor Julius Cohen, Deputy Director of the Institute for the Study of Mental Retardation in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Monsignor Thomas F. Cribbin of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops; Mildred Baptista, Executive Secretary of the General Federation of Women's Clubs; John Boyle, Director of Northern Area Special Education; and Maisie Wood, President, Maryland Alliance of Advocates with Handicapped People.

Special Education in the public schools, Vocational Rehabilitation for handicapped workers and Sheltered Workshops are not used enough by the people who would most profit from them.

The world of work: Move in and up

This workshop had to take over two large rooms and was still crowded. Everybody is interested in moving up. Section 503, dealing with affirmative action, specifically mentions advancement in employment. The moderator, Henry B. Stern, National Consultant on Employment for the American Foundation for

the Blind, introduced the participants: Dr. Herbert Bienstock, Director of the Center for Labor and Urban Programs at Queens College in Flushing, New York; Roger Herman, Associate Director of the Health Assistance Program of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; Phyllis Martin, Director, Center for Career Development and Columnist; J. Stephen Wastvedt, Administrator, Handicapped Employment Programs, Control Data Corporation.

Roger Herman assured the audience that the unions would not stand in the way of advancement of a handicapped person, even if physical limitations did not allow employment at the entry level. He reminded them that union members disabled by accident or disease were required to be re-employed and advanced on their return to work.

There were discussions about the real objectives of a job interview from the point of view of the employer, and an assessment of the types of jobs that will have to be filled in the next 20 years. For instance, elementary school teachers are going to be at a premium by 1985. The proportion of young to old workers will decline. The panel members, however, were more convinced than the audience that a person's disability counted less than his abilities. The questions seemed to indicate that headway in the equal employment and advancement of the handicapped worker is progressing, but by no means fully realized.

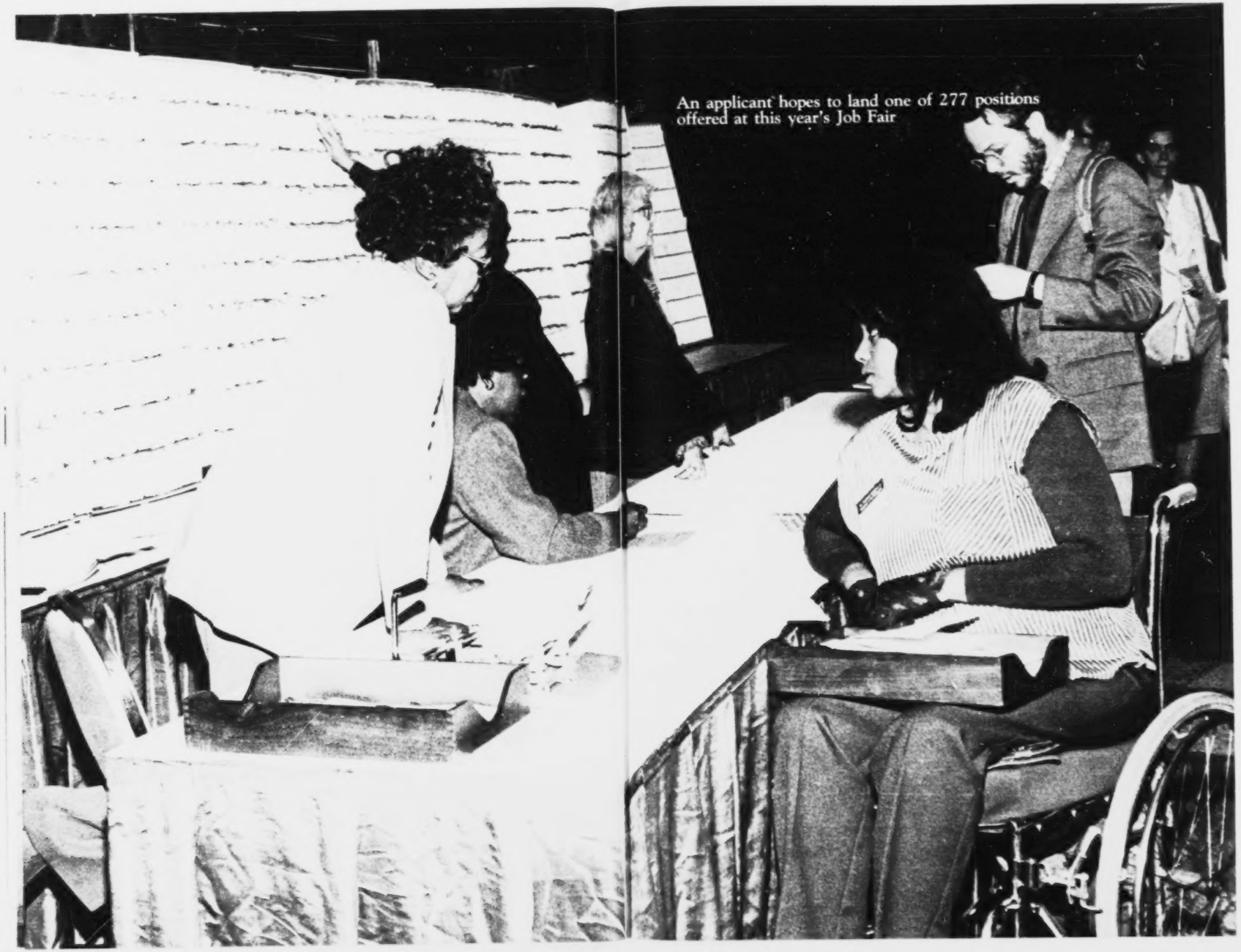
Quizzing the experts

Fred Sachs of the Rehabilitation Service Administration, and two lawyers, Michael McConnell from the Office of Management and Budget, and Robert D'Agostino, the Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, were among Government representatives ready to answer questions from a panel of developmentally disabled people.

Some of the panel's questions dealt with proposed changes in Section 504 regulations. Additional questions came from members of the overflow audience.

The speakers assured the audience that the new guidelines had not been published yet and that they would be given to a peer group of handicapped consumers for evaluation before being made public. Questioners stated that their remarks had been submitted sometime ago.

Edward Stiehl-Rios receives his plaque as "Handicapped American of the Year."



An applicant hopes to land one of 277 positions offered at this year's Job Fair

The speakers asked the audience for specific comments on specific situations. People in the audience asked for a general assurance that most situations affecting handicapped people would still be covered by the existing regulations and interpretations of Sections 503 and 504.

When it became apparent that there would be no meeting of the minds on the issue, some members of the audience left the meeting room for a brief ad-hoc demonstration. The demonstration did not interrupt the other workshops.

Reasonable cost of reasonable accommodation

This workshop, chaired by David Brigham of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, made some important points.

According to a study just completed, since handicapped employees average only 2.5% of the workforce, the cost of accommodation was never overwhelming.

The "Pensacola Special Steppers" enthusiastically demonstrate American folk dances.

It depended, of course, on the type of disability and the type of work. The study showed that accommodations for clerical work were more in the nature of slight adaptations, while ones for assembly line work had to be along the line of accident prevention. For example, there had to be changes in audible fire alarms when deaf workers joined the assembly line. A special sensor had been installed when an epileptic worker was hired; this sensed any lack of movement on his part, and shut off the line automatically. Accommodations for flex-time have been made along with special devices for mentally retarded workers.

The private sector: Careers with a future

This workshop also was crowded. The moderator, D.L. Webber, Director of Equal Opportunity Affairs for ITT, pointed to some of the likeliest areas of employment over the next few years. According to him, the three fastest growing industries are food services, health care and office services.

All these are services that had been highly labor-intensive and are now mechanized, computerized and much more impersonal. They are also, incidentally, by far easier to handle by a physically impaired person than they ever have been.

Speakers from the Marriott Corporation, IBM and the American Medical Association were on hand to discuss how their areas of work had changed over the past few years.

Job Fair

A total of 748 applicants registered at the Job Fair this year, a record.

Of the 277 positions offered by 65 employing corporations and government departments, 105 were in engineering; 60 in clerical and office skills; 48 in management, administration, accounting and consulting; 26 in health and social sciences; 24 in library and writing jobs; 5 for truck drivers and chauffeurs, another 5 for hotel and restaurant occupations; and 4 for retail and wholesale jobs.

The available positions were on computer read-outs, and some interviews were going on during the meeting. The processing is done through the Deparment of Labor.

Art

For the first time in the history of Annual Meetings, there were exhibits for sale right on the premises. Painters, weavers and clay sculptors showed their work in the corridor across from the meeting rooms. The work was of professional quality. Trade seemed brisk.

A sensitive film, "Best Boy," was shown to a full house. It told the story of a retarded adult leaving the care of his mother and taking up residence in a group home. The reluctance of the aging mother to let her child go, and the eagerness of her son to experience a wider world were beautifully portrayed.

Entertainment

Irene Gubrud, soprano who performs in opera and on the concert stage, was warmly received at the Opening Session. Her voice easily filled the vast International Ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel. The crutches she uses became invisible after the first few notes.

Joe Glazer with his guitar, the other entertainer during the Opening Session, presented the "Cookie Song," written especially for disabled people. It's bound to give a lift to handicapped children, and also adults, with its refrain, "I'm a little bit damaged but I taste just as good as any cookie should."

Beyond Sound's "Deaf Talent Showcase" gave a gripping dance and mime performance with interpretations for those who could hear. Their impact was so great that there was silence when they finished, then thunderous applause. The troupe was brought to the meeting from Los Angeles by AT & T.

They were followed by the "Pensacola Special Steppers," a delighful group of mentally disabled young people, who showed how square and folk dancing really should look.

Whyll and Don, the founders of the Creation Band which had entertained at last year's meeting, left the band at home this year. They came as a duo, singing and playing in the manner of the early sixties. They reminded the audience of the Beatles, the Temptations and the Righteous Brothers.

And, of course, Harold Krents was very warmly applauded when he sang the lyrics he wrote to his own compositions before taking up his duties as MC on Thursday night.

The "Kids on the Block" played to an SRO audience. Their number of puppets grows each year; each year they are becoming more fascinating. It's

hard to tell in an all-adult audience how children would react to the new skits, but judging from the grownups' rueful laughter, the disabled "kids" touched a wellspring of feeling and memory.

International Luncheon

The luncheon this year was a special event. It honored the delegates to the 1982 International Committee on Public Relations in Rehabilitation Conference which was hosted by the President's Committee, from April 25-30 at Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C. The topic of the meeting was "Disability and Communications: A Global Perspective" and it attracted 120 delegates from throughout the world.

Admiral David M. Cooney, the President of Goodwill Industries of America, was the luncheon Master of Ceremonies; the keynote address was given by Norman Acton, Secretary General of Rehabilitation International. His theme was the right of handicapped people to be an integral part of their society. He pointed out that more and better communication of information on the status of the handicapped people of the world was needed to improve conditions internationally. He said that we seldom know what the information we get—technical, political, medical—will mean in the years to come. If we knew, we might change our priorities.

On a global scale, Rehabilitation International works together with the World Health Organization and other international health organizations to achieve the goal of independence—although even in the most advanced countries of the world the goal is still a long way off.

Three international awards were presented by the People-to-People Committee for the Handicapped. The Marion Mills Preminger Medals went to Grace Reynolds of Iowa City, Iowa, and James F. Garrett, Ph.D., of New York, New York. The Volunteer of the Year Award was accepted by Sister Theresa Perney from the Society of Helpers in Chicago, Ill. Special awards were presented by Maria Theologos, Secretary General of the International Committee on Public Relations in Rehabilitation, headquartered in Athens, Greece.

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE ◇ 1982 361-270 (4969)

The President's Committee
on Employment
of the Handicapped
Washington, D.C. 20210

Official Business
Penalty for private use, $300

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of Labor

Third Class Mail

Lab 441